



News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Aug. 10, 2016 CONTACT: William Diepenbrock

PHONE: 909-445-1001

Baldwin Park Unified Expands Classroom Tech, STEM and Creates Parent App for 2016-17

District will welcome back 14,000 students on Aug. 11

BALDWIN PARK – More than 14,000 students will start classes at Baldwin Park Unified School District on Thursday, Aug. 11, greeted by expanded science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) courses, college prep programs, dual-language classes and classroom digital tools.

District leaders say the changes represent an aggressive investment in programs that will strengthen student opportunities for success in college and careers under Baldwin Park Unified's Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP).

"Each year, we look for new ways to deepen our academic program, including rigorous instruction in core subjects and new opportunities in significant electives, including STEM and college prep programs," Superintendent Froilan N. Mendoza said.

The District is expanding its primary engineering program at Holland Middle School and Baldwin Park High School, as well as launching a smaller robotics program at Sierra Vista High School. Holland, for example, added an additional period to ensure students could take STEM electives along with electives for its college preparatory program, Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID).

Additional STEM programs are being considered for future years at elementary schools that feed into the Holland-Baldwin Park High sequence and at Sierra Vista Junior High to feed into the Sierra Vista High robotics program.

MORE

In a culture of high expectations and academic rigor and an environment of support, understanding, and emotional safety, all Baldwin Park Unified School District students will graduate with a valued and highly respected diploma, prepared with the relevant skills, knowledge, and personal attributes necessary for success in a university or other institution of higher education and/or any post-secondary options of their choice.



News Release

AVID programs also received a boost this year, with teachers from five district middle, junior high and high schools taking an intensive summer training program. AVID helps students develop academic and life skills needed to succeed in college.

Students will also get a boost from a new a 12th-grade expository writing and reading class.

Other changes include the addition of the District's award-winning dual-language program to Sierra Vista High School and investment in career technical education (CTE) pathways funded by a \$1.8 million, three-year state grant. Pathways typically feature three years of instruction with introductory, intermediate and advanced courses in a career field.

Digital tools will also take on a more prominent role in the coming year.

This month, two teachers from each campus, two dual-language immersion teachers, assistant principals and principals from each school are learning how to use classroom digital tools. The District's leadership staff will also participate in the two-day training sessions.

To support the teachers, the District is upgrading its capacity for wireless internet connectivity, adding new carts of Chromebooks at each school and installing interactive whiteboard/projection systems in classrooms.

In all of the model classrooms, the focus will be on creating a student-centered environment in which teachers act as learning facilitators for a project-driven instructional system. In two prototype multi-lingual classrooms, extra emphasis will be on effective communication and collaboration in English and Spanish.

The District will also introduce a smartphone app to create a new channel for communications with families. The tool, which can be downloaded for free from Apple's App Store and Google Play, provides District news, check school calendars, bus routes, lunch menus and a host of student and parent resources.

###